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12 March 1958

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REPORT BY THE JOINT INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE

to the

JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

on

SOVIET REACTION TO U.S. DEPLOYMENT OF INTERMEDIATE
RANGE BALLISTIC MISSILES (IRBMS) (U)

DECLASSIFIED BY: _____
JCS DECLASSIFICATION BRANCH
DATE 15 May 1979

*Withdrawn from consideration
See N. to H., dated 17 Mar 58*

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2-11-79
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THE PROBLEM

1. To consider the Soviet (probable) reaction to U. S. 1
deployments of Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles (IRBM's) 2
in Western Europe. 3

FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

2. The Joint Chiefs of Staff directed* the Joint Intelligence 4
Committee to submit for their consideration an appreciation of 5
the Soviet reaction to U. S. deployments of IRBM's in Western 6
Europe. 7

DISCUSSION

3. This subject involves the full gamut of international 8
relations. It is necessary to estimate the probable actions 9
and reactions which the deployment of U. S. IRBM's may stimulate. 10

CONCLUSION

4. It is concluded that appreciation of the subject is best 11
achieved by preparation of an ESTIMATE which is hereby submitted 12
as an Enclosure. 13

RECOMMENDATIONS

5. It is recommended that the Joint Chiefs of Staff note 14
the enclosed ESTIMATE. 15
6. It is recommended that this report not be distributed 16
to commanders of unified or specified commands. 17

* SM-362-57, dated 6 December 1957

SOVIET REACTION TO U.S. DEPLOYMENT OF INTERMEDIATE
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By <i>JCS</i> NARS, DATE <i>1979</i>

471-6 (5-4-44) 2-16

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2. The Joint Chiefs of Staff directed* the Joint Intelligence Committee to submit for their consideration an appreciation of the Soviet reaction to U. S. deployments of IRBM's in Western Europe.

DISCUSSION

3. This subject involves the full gamut of international relations. It is necessary to estimate the probable actions and reactions which the deployment of U. S. IRBM's may stimulate.

CONCLUSION

4. It is concluded that appreciation of the subject is best achieved by preparation of an ESTIMATE which is hereby submitted as an Enclosure.

RECOMMENDATIONS

5. It is recommended that the Joint Chiefs of Staff note the enclosed ESTIMATE.
6. It is recommended that this report not be distributed to commanders of unified or specified commands.

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BY 44C NARS, LALD

D R A F T

JOINT INTELLIGENCE COMMITTEE ESTIMATE

PROBABLE SOVIET REACTIONS TO U. S. DEPLOYMENT
OF IRBMs IN WESTERN EUROPE

THE PROBLEM

1. To estimate probable Soviet reactions to United States deployment of Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles (IRBM's) in Western Europe.

SCOPE NOTE

2. This estimate considers the period from 1958 through 1962.
3. It does not consider the effect upon non-Sino-Soviet Bloc countries of U. S. deployment of IRBM's in Western Europe.
4. It does not consider the problems or difficulties of successfully negotiating the bilateral agreements necessary for the deployment of U. S. IRBM's in the various countries of Western Europe.
5. It does not consider probable Soviet reactions to a transfer of custody and control of U. S. IRBM's, including nuclear components, to nations of Western Europe.

ASSUMPTION

6. It is assumed that the United States has successfully negotiated the agreements necessary for such deployment.

APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM

7. As a basis for discussion and in consideration of current intelligence estimates for the period 1958 through 1962 it is pertinent to examine the problem in terms of several questions as follows:

a. From the Soviet viewpoint what would be the political significance of such deployment?

b. From the Soviet viewpoint what would be the military significance of such deployment?

BACKGROUND

8. Last spring in a series of communications the Soviets pointed out to certain NATO countries that their cooperation in U. S. deployment of nuclear weapon systems could lead to their involvement in a nuclear war.

9. Just prior to the December NATO conference the Soviets sent additional notes to NATO states reiterating the dangers to them which are inherent in United States deployment of nuclear and rocket weapons on their territories.

10. More recently the Soviets have proposed another "Summit Meeting". In addition they specifically have proposed again a "neutral zone" in Western Europe, suspension of nuclear tests, and a nonaggression agreement between the NATO and the Warsaw Pact nations. Their propaganda has also been directed at the Baghdad Pact nations concerning the consequences of permitting Western nations to establish military bases and to deploy nuclear weapons in that area.

11. The present Soviet propaganda line as reflected in the numerous notes sent to various nations has the following general themes with minor variations tailored to the specific conditions of each country:

a. To attack the "interdependence thesis" of NATO; that is, that the smaller nations are relinquishing their sovereignty.

b. To play on the fears of nuclear devastation among the peoples of Western countries.

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deployment of Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles (IRBM's)
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Bloc countries of U. S. deployment of IRBM's in Western Europe.

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- g. To create the specter of a rearmmed Germany setting
into motion forces not anticipated by the NATO participants.
- d. To explode the "myth" of U. S. military supremacy.
- e. To point out the dangers of commitments that would
involve them in conflicts over issues not vital to their
interests.
- f. To stress the Soviet theme of peaceful coexistence.

12. Public confidence of the NATO and other Allied nations
in the technological superiority of the United States has
been shaken by the USSR's successful launching of two earth
satellites and by the evident Soviet successes in the nuclear
and missile fields.

DISCUSSION

13. The Sino-Soviet Bloc has for a number of years been
faced with military encirclement and the threat of certain
nuclear retaliation to Sino-Soviet military aggression against
the U. S. or its Allies. In addition the leaders of the Sino-
Soviet Bloc almost certainly attribute a nuclear capability
to United States combat forces deployed overseas. This
situation and our judgement of the military, political and
economic capabilities which the Soviets now possess and may
further develop throughout the period is the basis for our
estimate that general war is unlikely.

From the Soviet point of view, what would be the
political significance of United States deployment of IRBM's
to Western Europe?

14. Assuming that the United States had successfully
negotiated the agreements necessary for deployment of IRBM's
in Western Europe, from the Soviet viewpoint, it would mean
that:

- a. The underlying philosophy of NATO had prevailed. 1
- b. Conversely, Soviet efforts to achieve their 2
objectives in the NATO area, that is to weaken the 3
cohesion of the alliance and to force withdrawal of 4
U. S. military power, had at least temporarily failed 5
or suffered a reversal. 6
- c. The West was visibly demonstrating its cohesion 7
and willing cooperation to present a unified front in 8
opposition to Soviet objectives. 9

15. Within the Satellites mixed views would prevail and 10
vary from the extreme of increased psychological fears of 11
their inevitable destruction to the view that increased 12
pressure on the Soviets would result in their eventual 13
liberation. 14

From the Soviet point of view, what would be the 15
military significance of such deployment? 16

16. Our current estimate is that the USSR considers general 17
war as both an undesirable and prohibitive course of action 18
throughout the period. The development of significant Allied 19
ballistic missile capabilities will create a threat against 20
which there is little or no chance of the Soviets developing 21
an effective defense by 1962. Hence from the Soviet point 22
of view, they already face a forbidding situation which with 23
the advent of ballistic missiles, wherever deployed, will 24
become increasingly unfavorable and general war as a course 25
of action will continue to be forbidding. 26

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17. From the Soviet military viewpoint, deployment of U. S. ICBM's in Western Europe prior to the development of a significant U. S. ICBM capability therefore will tend to present to them the threat of ballistic missiles earlier in the period of the estimate. Further such deployment would tend to counterbalance any advantage they may have or may hope to achieve in the development of ballistic missiles.

18. Specifically, such deployment would, from the Soviet viewpoint have two aspects:

a. The change in the degree of threat to Soviet security inherent in the threat of ballistic missiles, and

b. Of equal or perhaps greater military significance, the increase in the threat to Soviet security by deployment of U. S. ICBM's to areas of Western Europe which do not at the present time pose a direct military threat because of the lack of significant Allied or U. S. military power. Such deployment would markedly increase the threat and further limit Soviet initiative and flexibility.

THE ESTIMATE OF SOVIET REACTIONS

19. Having failed to prevent the successful negotiation of bilateral agreements necessary for the deployment of U. S. ICBM's to Western Europe, the Soviets in their realistic manner and recognition of the implications might perversely welcome the propaganda benefits offered by such deployment.

20. It is certain that the Soviets would exploit every propaganda opportunity, with variations tailored to the specific conditions of each country, in order to delay and forestall the actual deployment of ICBM's. They would attempt to increase the difficulties of such deployments by such means as inciting local civil disturbances, public meetings, strikes and in some instances possibly attempting sabotage of facilities.

21. The Soviets would not, however, take any action which
in their judgement would seriously incur the risk of general
war.

22. Specifically, it would be the Soviet purpose to drive
home the contention that Western moves had increased
tensions and the risk of general war. They might step
up pressure on the Western position in Berlin, using the GDR
as their stalking horse.

23. The USSR might feel it advisable to counterbalance this
military threat by an apparent strengthening of the Warsaw
Pact even to the extent of implying that Satellite forces
are equipped with nuclear weapons. However, this would
increase their own difficulties of control and it is considered
more likely that the Soviets would attempt to exploit their
propaganda of "peaceful intentions" and not provide Satellite
forces with nuclear weapons.

24. It is almost certain that Soviet forces in the Satellites
would be equipped with nuclear weapons. However, in view of
geographic and security factors it is unlikely that this would
include deployment of IRBM's within the Satellites. This does
not preclude the possibility that the Soviets would announce
or imply for propaganda purposes that they had deployed IRBM's
within certain of the Satellites.

25. In addition, the over-all implications of the continued
strength and cohesion of NATO might cause the Soviets to
withhold any contemplated liberalization and relaxation of
control within the Satellites, recognizing that such a policy
might be interpreted as a Soviet weakness in response to Western
pressures and therefore as inviting more venturesome actions

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bilateral agreements necessary for the deployment of U. S. IRBM's
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Within the Satellites. Such a reaction might 1
within the USSR itself and lead to a general hardening of 2
Party control. As a corollary, this could lead to a reduction 3
of cultural, scientific-technical, and economic international 4
exchanges. 5

26. Finally, it is estimated that the Soviets might stimulate 6
or incite local disturbances or incidents in the Middle and 7
Far East in an attempt to divert Allied and particularly the 8
U. S. effort from Western Europe. 9

CONCLUSIONS

27. The Soviets will recognize, in their realistic fashion, 10
that U. S. deployment of IRBM's to Western Europe would 11
essentially do nothing more from the military viewpoint than 12
aggravate a situation which already makes general war a 13
prohibitive course of action for them to pursue during the 14
period of this estimate. 15

28. Their "thesis - anti-thesis" process of thought will 16
probably lead them to a conclusion that such deployment affords 17
them an excellent propaganda opportunity which they will 18
probably exploit to maximum advantage. 19

29. If the Soviets fail by propaganda measures and creation 20
of unfavorable public opinion to prevent the actual deployment 21
of U. S. IRBM's to Western Europe, it is estimated that their 22
reactions probably will lead to a hardening of attitude on an 23
international basis and a strengthening of Communist control 24
within the Satellites and the USSR. 25

30. The Soviets will not, however, as the result of such 26
deployment resort to actions which in their judgement would 27
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